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UNHCR ACTIVITIES FINANCED BY VOLUNTARY FUNDS: REPORT FOR 1993-1994 AND PROPOSED PROGRAMMES AND BUDGET FOR 1995

PART V. SOUTH WEST ASIA, NORTH AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST

Section 4 - Cyprus

(submitted by the High Commissioner)

GE.94-03273

V.4 CYPRUS

Country Overview

Characteristics of the displaced and refugee population

1. At the request of the Secretary-General, UNHCR has continued its role as coordinator of the United Nations Humanitarian Programme of Assistance for Cyprus, which has provided assistance to persons uprooted and displaced within the island following the events of 1974. At the further request of the Government of Cyprus, contributions to this programme are channelled through UNHCR. Within this framework and as from 1981, some 265,000 displaced persons, comprising 200,000 persons from the Greek Cypriot community (GCC) and 65,000 persons from the Turkish Cypriot community (TCC) have been assisted under an annual grant of $ 10 million made available by the Government of the United States of America.

2. At 31 December 1993, Cyprus also hosted a refugee population of 82 persons, mainly from the former Yugoslavia and the Middle East. Forty needy persons from among this group are currently assisted by UNHCR. In addition, there are 42 persons of concern to UNHCR from the former Yugoslavia who do not require material or financial assistance, but for whom the UNHCR Chief of Mission in Cyprus has requested extension of their visas. Most of the refugees are of urban background and live in small, rented flats in the main cities in Cyprus. The breakdown of the refugees and displaced persons in Cyprus was as follows:

Country of Origin	Number 1/1/93	Number 31/12/93	Per Cent M F C	Location	Type of Assistance
Cyprus (displaced-GCC)	200,000	200,000	- / - / -	Various	Care & maintenance
Cyprus (displaced-TCC)	65,000	65,000	- / - / -	"	"
Former Yugoslavia	33	42	59/29/17	Concentrated in major centres in Cyprus	
Various			35/27/38	"	"

Out of the 40 assisted refugees, nine were aged 0-4, six were aged 5-17 and the rest of the 25 refugees were aged 18 and above. There were 21 males and 19 females.

Programme objectives and priorities

Refugees of various nationalities

3. UNHCR will continue to provide international protection and promote durable solution for refugees and persons of concern to the Office. In some cases, resettlement options will need to be examined for those who are unable to return to their countries of origin and who, at the same time, are also not in a position to extend their stay in Cyprus for reasons of personal safety and security. For others, the solution may be voluntary repatriation, depending on developments in their respective countries of origin.

4. UNHCR will provide subsistence assistance to needy and vulnerable refugees, including women and children, while promoting self-sufficiency among those refugees able to be employed through job placement programmes. This emphasis on increased self-sufficiency among the refugees will focus particularly on women refugees. At the same time, parents will be encouraged to make use of the free medical and educational facilities for refugee children offered by the Government of Cyprus.

5. UNHCR will continue to promote a more complete understanding by the authorities of their responsibilities and obligations towards refugees and persons of concern to UNHCR with respect to the various international instruments, in particular the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol. In this regard, a follow-up refugee law seminar is scheduled to take place in Cyprus later this year.

Internally displaced population

6. UNHCR in Cyprus will facilitate within its mandate the identification and expansion of bi-communal projects and other confidence building measures in order to achieve a lasting solution for the displaced communities in Cyprus. It will regularly review and evaluate the impact of these projects. A drive by UNHCR to ensure the increased and full participation of women in all aspects and phases of the bi-communal projects should contribute to the strengthening of this objective. Such participation by refugee women will include the planning and design of project objectives, activities, targeting of beneficiaries, implementation of the projects and the ongoing evaluation of their impact on the lives and welfare of the beneficiaries, particularly women, children and other vulnerable groups.

7. With regard to the implementation of the bi-communal projects, one of UNHCR's objectives will be to assist in the timely submission of project proposals from the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities. In recent years, delays in the submission of project proposals have delayed programme implementation and performance.

Programme delivery and administration support costs

8. The Office will further implement the recommendations made by the United Nations External Board of Auditors in 1993 (A/AC.96/812), in order to improve programme management and ensure better control in the relation to administrative support costs.

Arrangements for implementation/related inputs

9. UNHCR directly implements the care and maintenance programme in favour of the refugee population in Cyprus. In addition, the Cypriot authorities provide free medical care and educational facilities for refugee children.

10. The Cyprus Red Cross Society is UNHCR's implementing partner in providing multi-purpose assistance under the Humanitarian Programme of Assistance benefiting the internally displaced persons in Cyprus. Close cooperation is maintained with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Peace-Keeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) as well as with the Office of the Representative of the Secretary-General.

General Programmes

(a) **Variations in planned activities in 1993**

11. As a result of the cooperation and support received from the authorities in granting work permits to needy and vulnerable refugees, pending a durable solution to their situation, UNHCR was able to refocus the programme on the promotion of self-support. This programme reorientation has been further expanded in 1994.

(b) **1994 planned implementation**

12. Further efforts are being undertaken by UNHCR to promote the attainment of self-sufficiency among the vulnerable refugees who are awaiting a durable solution. As mentioned above, the granting of temporary work permits to vulnerable and needy refugees by the Government of Cyprus has greatly contributed to this process. Project activities include a job placement programme for needy refugees, particularly for those with the type of skills demanded by the local market. Interviews are conducted with targeted beneficiaries, including as many women as possible, especially where women are heads of families and their aptitudes and skills are likely to be required.

(c) **1995 programme proposals**

Care and maintenance

13. Concerted efforts to find durable solutions for the refugees in Cyprus will be pursued in 1995, while promoting increased self-sufficiency among the vulnerable refugees. This will be achieved through various measures, including identifying employment opportunities and consequent development of skills, which will be essential in the event of voluntary repatriation or resettlement in any third country.

Special Programmes

Internally Displaced Persons

(a) Variations in planned activities in 1993

14. Owing to the late submission of the 1993 projects by the two communities, programme implementation could only commence in late 1993. This has had a consequent effect on the implementation of the 1994 programme.

15. As of 1993, the programme of humanitarian assistance to displaced persons in Cyprus, funded under a grant from the United States Government, was devoted entirely to bi-communal projects, designed to encourage cooperation between the two communities, in contrast to the previous system which focused simply on raising the standard of living of the displaced persons.

(b) 1994 planned implementation

16. The Office of the UNHCR Chargé de Mission in Cyprus will continue to promote and implement, in close cooperation with the authorities, activities related to the International Year of the Family through its ongoing bi-communal projects, with particular emphasis being given to the health, environment and forestry sectors.

17. UNHCR is giving increased importance to the selection of the type of bi-communal projects, as they now constitute the entire programme activity for the two communities. Emphasis is also given to other confidence building measures which promote contact and cooperation between the two communities. Targeted sectors include health, shelter, sanitation, environment, agriculture, education and forestry. One of the major events in 1994 will be the inauguration of the new Cyprus Institute of Neurology and Genetics, the inputs to which were provided under bi-communal projects over several years.

18. As in 1993, the project proposals for 1994 are late in being submitted to UNHCR by the two communities, with the result that delays in the implementation of the programme and consequently delays in the timely utilization of the 1994 grant provided by the United States Government will again occur.

(c) 1995 programme proposals

19. The initial allocation proposed for implementing the 1995 programme represents an amount equivalent to the anticipated grant from the United States Government, in order to continue, under the same implementation arrangements as in previous years, the programme of humanitarian assistance in Cyprus, covering bi-communal projects for the displaced Greek and Turkish communities. Special emphasis will be given to ensure the continued participation of more women in all aspects related to the bi-communal activities.

Programme Delivery and Administrative Support Costs

(a) Variations in planned activities in 1993

20. The level of Programme Delivery and Administrative Support costs in Cyprus in 1993 was maintained at around 5 percent of the total grant provided by the Government of the United States for the programme of Humanitarian Assistance to Displaced Persons in Cyprus. The staffing level was maintained with two international and six local staff. There were thus no major variations in activities in 1993. Total expenditure was marginally higher than expected owing to a short overlap in salaries arising from the rotation of Programme Officers. Costs under the budget chapter for the acquisition of furniture, equipment and vehicles, however, were lower, as it was determined that consideration for the replacement of two old office vehicles could be deferred to 1994.

21. An audit of the activities of the Office of the UNHCR Chargé de Mission in Cyprus and that of its implementing partners was conducted by the United Nations External Board of Auditors from 15 March to 3 April 1993. The observations and recommendations made by the Board of Auditors (A/AC.96/812) were largely implemented in 1993.

(b) 1994 planned implementation

22. The revised 1994 requirements are slightly higher than the initial estimates to cover increased salary and common staff costs, the latter having been budgeted at a more appropriate level. Costs under general operating expenses and office supplies and materials are lower due to the slow pace in the implementation of the programme. Costs under acquisition of vehicles and equipment have increased to enable the purchase of one office vehicle and for the upgrading of computer equipment.

23. Taking into account the recommendations of the United Nations External Board of Auditors regarding separation of certain staff functions, training of local staff members has been carried out and is still ongoing. Staff functions and responsibilities have been more appropriately defined in order to improve programme management and administrative support activities.

(c) 1995 programme proposals

24. The 1995 initial requirements are largely maintained at the 1994 level. All existing posts have been extended until 31 December 1995. Costs under general operating expenses are estimated to be slightly higher in 1995. Provision under this budget chapter includes some renovations to office premises which are required with the anticipated expansion in the bi-communal activities. It is expected that additional computer equipment will be purchased to upgrade the electronic mail system. Provision has also been made for the replacement of the second office vehicle.

UNHCR EXPENDITURE IN CYPRUS

(in thousands of United States dollars)

1993	1994		1995	
AMOUNT OBLIGATED	ALLOCATION APPROVED BY 1993 EXCOM	PROPOSED REVISED ALLOCATION	SOURCE OF FUNDS AND TYPE OF ASSISTANCE	PROPOSED ALLOCATION/ PROJECTION
GENERAL PROGRAMMES (1)				
57.9	67.2	61.2	CARE AND MAINTENANCE	58.4
57.9	67.2	61.2	SUB-TOTAL OPERATIONS	58.4
57.9	**67.2**	**61.2**	**TOTAL (1)**	**58.4**
SPECIAL PROGRAMMES (2)				
6.0	–	–	EDUCATION ACCOUNT	–
9,422.6	9,495.3	9440.2	HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO DISPLACED PERSONS IN CYPRUS	9,450.0
–	–	376.1	PROGRAMME DELIVERY See Annexes I a and II a	375.5
424.3	435.4	96.7	ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT See Annexes I b and II b	102.2
9,852.9	**9,930.7**	**9,913.0**	**TOTAL (2)**	**9,927.7**
9,910.8	**9,997.9**	**9,974.2**	**GRAND TOTAL (1+2)**	**9,986.1**